

Discover Life Community 101



www.lifecommunityaz.com

Welcome to Discovering Life Community

We're glad you've chosen to find out more about Life Community! This class is the basic introduction to our church family. Since we have members from many different church backgrounds, this class was designed to clearly explain who and what our church is.

THE BASICS FOR THIS CLASS

"...You are a member of God's very own family...and you belong in God's household with every other Christian." Ephesians 2:19 (LB)

KEY TRUTHS

1. The church is a **FAMILY**.
2. God expects you to be a **MEMBER** of a church family.
3. A Christian without a church family is a **ORPHAN**.

THE GOAL OF THIS CLASS

That I will commit myself to **CHRIST** and to **LIFE COMMUNITY**.

WHAT MAKES LIFE COMMUNITY A FAMILY?

Three things unite us:

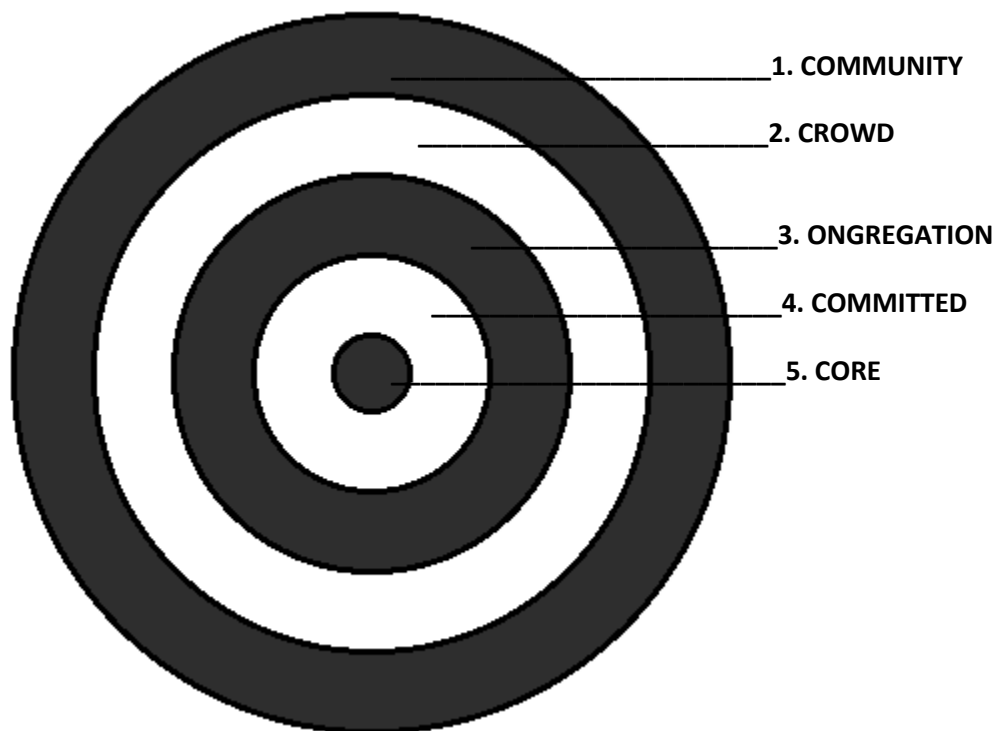
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|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Our SALVATION | What God has done for us |
| 2. Our STRATEGY | How we fulfill our purpose |
| 3. Our STRUCTURE | When and where we fulfill our purpose |

The Life Community Strategy

"I have been all things to all sorts of people that by every possible means I might win some to God. I do all of this for the sake of the Good News." 1 Corinthians 9:22-23 (PH)

WHO WE ARE TRYING TO REACH

"...Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him." 1 Corinthians 9:22 (LB)



LIFE Community's objective is to keep moving people toward the center by encouraging personal spiritual commitments. Specifically, we call people to four basic commitments:

THE 3 LIFE COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS

1. The Membership Covenant

is a commitment to CHRIST and LIFE COMMUNITY.

“You are members of God’s very own family...and you belong in God’s household with every other Christian.” Ephesians 2:19 (LB)

“We are all parts of Christ’s Body, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we belong to each other and need all the others.” Romans 12:4-5 (LB)

2. The Maturity Covenant

Is a commitment to the HABITS necessary for spiritual growth.

“Continue to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18

“Take the time and trouble to keep yourself spiritually fit.” 1 Timothy 4:7

3. The Ministry Covenant

Is a commitment to discovering and using my God-given gifts and abilities in **SERVING** God and others.

“God has given each of you some special abilities: be sure to use them to help each other...” 1 Peter 4:10

“There are different kinds of service to God...together you form the Body of Christ and each one of you is a necessary part of it.” 1 Corinthians 12:5, 27 (LB)

WHY DO WE HAVE THESE COMMITMENTS?

We become what we are **COMMITTED TO**.

HOW LIFE COMMUNITY IS STRUCTURED

*“For God is not a God of disorder, but of peace...Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”
1 Corinthians 14:33, 40*

1. The Church is a FELLOWSHIP.

“They continued steadily learning the teaching of the apostles, and joined in the fellowship...” Acts 2:42

A top priority in fellowship is UNITY and HARMONY.

*“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”
Ephesians 4:3*

“So let us concentrate on the things that make for harmony and the growth of our fellowship together.” Romans 14:19 (Ph)

Implication: A good structure promotes unity and downplays DIVISION.

“(Often)...your meetings do more harm than good because I hear that when you come together as a church there are divisions among you...” 1 Corinthians 11:17-18

*Voting tends to **CREATE DIVISION***

At Life Community, we only vote on:

- Purchase of land or buildings
- Acquiring Debt

2. The Church is a FAMILY.

"You should be like one big happy family, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds." 1 Peter 3:8 (LB)

Galatians 6:10 Hebrews 2:10-12 1 Peter 4:17

So we operate on the basis of RELATIONSHIP not RULES.

"Don't reprimand a senior member of the church, appeal to him as a father. Treat the young men as brothers, and the older women as mothers. Treat the younger women as sisters..." 1 Timothy 5:1-2

"(A Pastor) must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. If anyone does not know how to manage his family, how can he take care of God's church?" 1 Timothy 3:4-5

3. The Church is a BODY.

1 Corinthians 12:27 Ephesians 1:22-23 Colossians 1:18, 2:19

Therefore, we function on the basis of SPIRITUAL GIFTS not ELECTED OFFICES.

"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We each have different gifts according to the grace given to us." Romans 12:4-6

"God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up..." Ephesians 4:11-12

OUR STRUCTURE:

- **The People are the MINISTERS**
- **The Pastors are the ADMINISTRATORS**

4. The Church is a FLOCK.

(Jesus' favorite description of the church)

John 10:1-30

Matthew 26:31

Mathew 25:33

Therefore, it is cared for and led by SHEPHERDS.

"Jesus asked Simon Peter 'Do you really love me?' 'Yes Lord,' said Peter. 'Then take care of my sheep...' John 21:16-17

"Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived he said to them...Guard yourselves and to all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be pastors of the church of God..." Acts 20:17-18, 28

Life Community Mission Statement

"Seeing Unchurched people and the Next Generation Become Passionate Followers of Christ."

WHY OUR CHURCH MUST NEVER STOP GROWING

A. Because GOD LOVES PEOPLE.

"The Lord...is patient, not wanting anyone to perish, but wants everyone to come to repentance."
2 Peter 3:9

2 Corinthians 5:14 Luke 15:3-10 Matthew 9:12-13

B. Because GOD COMMANDS US TO GO.

"Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be full."
Luke 14:23 (LB)

"...you will be my witnesses..." Acts 1:8

C. Because GROWTH IS GOD'S WILL.

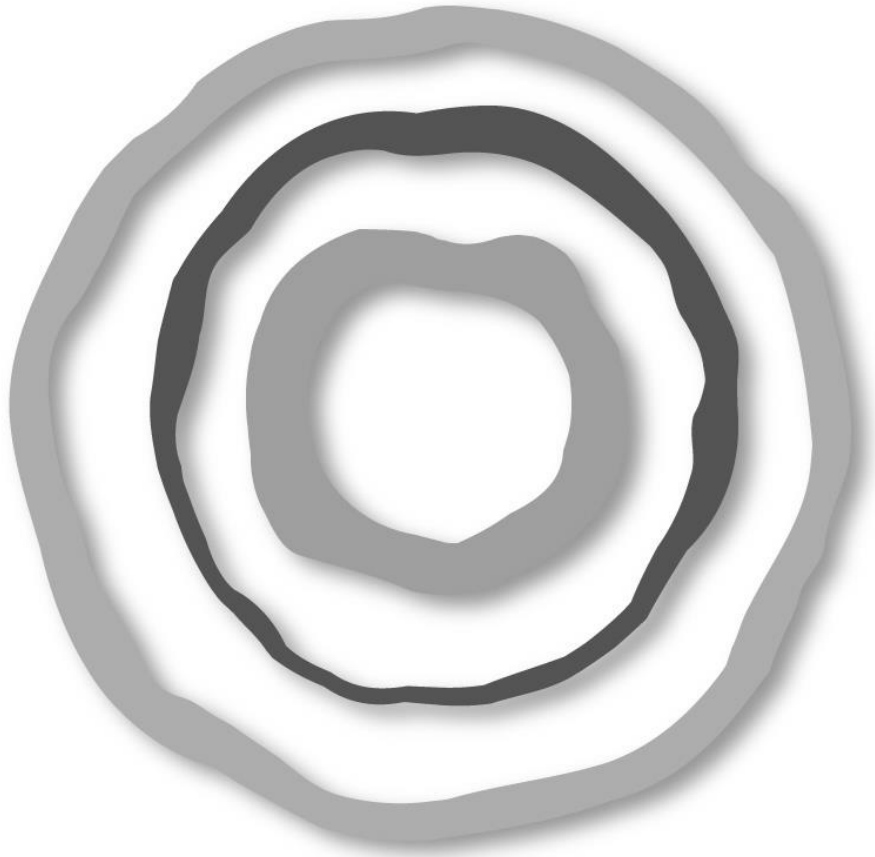
"Under Christ's control, the whole Body is nourished...and grows as God wants it to grow."
Colossians 2:19 (GN)

"(Jesus) I will build my church." Matthew 16:18

Unbiblical Excuses for Not Growing:

- *God isn't interested in Numbers*
- *Our Church wants Quality not Quantity*
- *Large Churches are Impersonal*

THE THREE CIRCLES



1. PERSONAL PREFERENCE

2. PERSONAL CONVICTION

3. ABSOLUTE TRUTH

LIFE COMMUNITY STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. About God

God is the creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three Personalities: The Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three co-equals are one God.

2. About Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is the co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifices for the sins of all people by dying on the cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin, sickness, and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of King's and Lord of Lord's.

3. About the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. Even though Holy Spirit lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation there is a separate experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit that endows people with power for living, understanding of spiritual Truth, and guidance in doing what is right. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily.

4. About the Bible

The Bible is God's word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is truth without any mixture of error.

5. About Salvation

Salvation is God's free gift to us but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

6. About Eternity

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal experience.

OUR SALVATION

“For now we are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, and we who have been baptized into union with Christ are enveloped by Him. We are no longer Jews or Gentiles, or slaves or free men, or even merely men or women, but we are all the same- we are Christians; we are one in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:26-28

John 3:5-7 *“I assure you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don’t be surprised when I say, ‘You must be born again.’*

John 3:16 *“For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.”*

THE CROSS

WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?

1. **ADMIT** that God has not been first place in your life and ask him to forgive your sins.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from every wrong." 1 John 1:9

2. **BELIEVE** that Jesus died to pay for your sins and that he rose again on Easter, and is alive today.

"If you confess that Jesus is your Lord, and you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name (Jesus) by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

3. **ACCEPT** God's free gift to Salvation. Don't try to earn it.

"For it is by grace you are saved, through faith- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God- not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8-9

Our relationship with God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!

4. **INVITE** Jesus Christ to come into your life and be the director (Lord) of your life.

"To all who receive Him, He gives the right to become children of God. All we need to do is to trust Him to save us. All those who believe this are reborn!- not a physical rebirth...but from the will of God." John 1:12-13

"Jesus says, 'Listen! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and open the door, I will come in..." Revelation 3:30

You can take these steps by praying a simple prayer of commitment to God:

"Dear Jesus, thank you for making me and loving me, even when I've ignored you and gone my own way. I realize I need you in my life and I'm sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Please help me to grow now as a Christian."

HOW LIFE COMMUNITY IS FUNDED?

Life Community is supported by Consistent **TITHES** and Offerings,
not through Profitable **BUSINESS** practices.

WHAT IS TITHING?

Malachi 3:10-12 *“Bring the whole tithe into the Storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. 11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit,” says the Lord Almighty. 12 “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the Lord almighty.*

Deuteronomy 14:23 *The purpose of Tithing is to teach you always to put God first in your lives.*

2 Cor. 8:7 *“Just as you excel in everything else... in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness... see that you also excel in the grace of giving.”*

1. What the Bible teaches about Tithing?

“Tithe” means “A **10TH** part”

2. What is the difference between a “Tithe” and an “Offering?”

A “Tithe” is giving **10%** of my income

An “Offering” is anything I give **IN ADDITION** to my Tithe.

3. What should I Tithe?

The **FIRST PART** part of what I earn, not the **LEFTOVERS**

“Honor the Lord by giving him the first part of all your income.” Proverbs 3:9-10

4. Where should I give my Tithe?

Where I **WORSHIP**

“Bring your whole Tithe to My Storehouse....” Mal 3:10

5. When should I Tithe? CONSISTENTLY

WHY GOD WANTS ME TO GIVE

6 Benefits to My Life

1. GIVING DRAWS ME CLOSER TO GO

"Where your treasure is, there your heart is also." Matt.6:21

2. GIVING IS THE ANTIDOTE TO MATERIALISM

"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to be generous and willing to share. In this way they may take hold of the life that is truly Life!" 1Tim. 6:17-19

3. GIVING STRENGTHENS MY FAITH

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Honor the Lord by giving him the first part of your income, and he will fill your barns to overflowing." Prov.3:5,9

*"Give and it will be given to you ... For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."
Luke 6:38*

4. GIVING IS AN INVESTMENT IN ETERNITY

"... Give happily to those in need, and always be ready to share whatever God has given you. By doing this, you will be storing up real treasure for yourselves in heaven - it is the only safe investment for eternity. 1 Tim 6:18-19 (LB)

5. GIVING BLESSES ME IN RETURN

"A generous man himself will be blessed." Prov. 22:9

"A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." Prov.11:25

"Good will come to him who is generous ..." Ps. 112:5

6. GIVING MAKES ME HAPPY

(Jesus) "There is more happiness in giving than in receiving." Acts 20:35

LIFE COMMUNITY HAS 5 WAYS TO GIVE

1. OFFERING AND SQUARE

Bring your cash or check on a Sunday morning

2. WEBSITE

Go to ww.lifecommunityaz.com, click on "Give". You can give a one time gift or set up recurring transfers.

3. AUTO TITHE

You can set up a ACH transfer where you pay an amount regularly through an automatic transfer.

4. BILL PAY

Set up Bill Pay through your bank, they mail us your tithe.

5. TEXT TO GIVE

Text any amount to 480.376.7070, the amount comes from your bank and gets deposited to ours.

OUR AFFILIATION

The Foursquare Church: Foursquare.org

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MEMBER

The difference between “attenders” and “members” can be summed up in one word: **COMMITMENT.**

At Life Community, we recognize the need for a formal membership. We ask you to commit to membership for four reasons.

1. A BIBLICAL Reason: Christ is committed to the church

“...Christ loved the church, and he gave his life for it.” Ephesians 5:25

2. A CULTURAL Reason: It is an antidote for our society

We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything...a job...a marriage...our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of “church shoppers and hoppers.” Membership swims against the current of America’s “consumer religion.” It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

3. A PRACTICAL Reason: It defines who can be counted on

Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our family.

4. A SPIRITUAL Reason: It produces spiritual growth

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you’re not committed to any specific church family.

Colossians 1:28-29 *“We preach Christ, warning people not to add to the Message. We teach in a spirit of profound common sense so that we can bring each person to maturity. To be mature is to be basic. Christ! No more, no less. 29 That’s why I’m working so hard day after day, year after year, doing my best with the energy God so generously gives me.”*

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME AS A MEMBER?

At Life Community we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christians to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Covenant.

THE LIFE COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

“Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with Life Community’s statements, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Life Community church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

1. I will protect the UNITY of my church

- ...By acting in love toward other members
- ...By refusing to gossip
- ...By following the leaders

“So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together.” Romans 15:19 (Ph)

“Live in complete harmony with each other- each with the attitude of Christ toward each other.” Romans 15:5 (LB)

“Have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts.” 1 Peter 1:22 (GN)

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of our mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs...” Ephesians 4:29

“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you.” Hebrews 13:17

2. I will share the MISSION of my church

- ...By praying for its growth
- ...By inviting the un-churched to attend
- ...By warmly welcoming those who visit

*"To the church...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly." 1
Thessalonians 1:2*

*"Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be
full." Luke 14:23*

*"So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed
you; then God will be glorified." Romans 15:7 (LB)*

3. I will serve the MINISTRY of my church

- ...By discovering my gifts and talents
- ...By being equipped to serve by my pastors
- ...By developing a servant's heart

"Serve one another with particular gifts God has given each of you..." 1 Peter 4:10 (Ph)

*"God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of
ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up..." Ephesians 4:11-12*

*"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of
others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ...who took on the very
nature of a servant..." Philippians 2:3-4, 7*

4. I will support the TESTIMONY of my church

...By attending faithfully

...By living a godly life

...By giving regularly

*“Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...but let us encourage one another.”
Hebrews 10:25*

“But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ.” Philippians 1:27

“Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering.” 1 Corinthians 16:2

“A tenth of all you produce is the Lord’s, and it is holy.” Leviticus 27:30

VISION STATEMENT OF LIFE COMMUNITY

We dream of a Spirit-filled Foursquare church family where over 2,500 people gather weekly: To grow in Christ likeness, to worship, to hear the word of God and to develop life-long relationships.

We dream of 1,000 members who have committed themselves to the Maturity Covenant: Having a daily quiet time with God, giving a consistent tithe to God, participating in a weekly small group of spiritual Growth in God and actively involved in a ministry with God.

We dream of a network of 100 small groups within our church providing support, encouragement, and acceptance to our members as they seek to grow in Christ likeness: Led by loving shepherds, who are growing in Christ-like Character, trained in a small group dynamics, and grounded in the basic beliefs of our faith.

We dream of offering Bible studies, topical seminars and skill development classes every day and night of the week, as well as, annual retreats for special occasions.

We dream of an age-appropriate Life Development process that leads our children and youth to fall in love with Jesus for a lifetime: Committing themselves to the fellowship of the church, spiritual maturity, discovering their ministry, and understanding their life mission in the world.

Finally...and most significantly...we dream of reaching un-churched people in the East Valley: Being people who demonstrate the love of God, the love of people, and the life transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 1:28-29 Message

We preach Christ, warning people not to add to the Message. We teach in a spirit of profound common sense so that we can bring each person to maturity. TO be mature is to be basic. Christ! No more, no less. That's what I'm working so hard at day after day, year after year; doing my best with the energy God so generously gives me.

Matthew 18:19 NLT

"I also tell you this: If two of you agree down here on earth concerning anything you ask, My Father in heaven will do it for you."

Membership Covenant

Name _____ Spouse's Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

E-Mail Address _____

Phone (best number to reach you) _____

Phone (2nd best number to reach you) _____

Signed

Date



